Claim 27 includes limitations similar to claim 26, and is also not anticipated by the teachings in the cited art for the same exact reasons set forth above. Hence, dependent claims 26 and 27 are patentable under the provisions of 35 USC § 102.

Conclusion

Thus, the Applicants submit that none of the claims, presently in the application, is anticipated under the provisions of 35 USC § 102.

Consequently, the Applicants believe that all these claims are presently in condition for allowance. Accordingly, both reconsideration of this application and its swift passage to issue are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

November 13, 2001

Peter L. Michaelson, Attorney
Reg. No. 30,090
Customer No. 007265
(732) 530-6671

MICHAELSON & WALLACE
Counselors at Law
Parkway 109 Office Center
328 Newman Springs Road
P.O. Box 8489
Red Bank, New Jersey 07701

Version of Pending Claims Without Markings

1. A method of controlling the intensity of a backlight in a display device having a housing and also having a screen mounted in the housing, the screen having a front side comprising a viewing surface, the screen having a rear side comprising a non-viewing surface, the display device also having a first photo-sensor, and a second photo-sensor, the first photo-sensor being positioned to detect light at the front side, the second photo-sensor being positioned to detect light at the rear side, the method comprising:

using said first photo-sensor to detect the intensity of light incident on the viewing surface;

receiving a brightness setting signal indicative of a user selected brightness level;

using the second photo-sensor to detect the intensity of light incident on the non-viewing surface, wherein the light incident on the non-viewing surface comprises ambient light originating from outside the housing and also entering the housing from behind the non-viewing surface;

and

adjusting the amount of power supplied to a backlight as a function of the detected light intensity incident on the viewing surface, the received brightness setting signal, and the detected light intensity incident on the non-viewing surface.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

periodically repeating the step of adjusting the amount of power.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the step of periodically repeating the step of adjusting the amount of power is performed automatically by the display device without user intervention.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the screen is a transmissive liquid crystal display screen.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

receiving a brightness setting signal indicative of a user selected brightness level; and

wherein the step of adjusting the amount of power supplied to the backlight is also performed as a function of the received brightness setting signal.

7. The method of claim 5 wherein the display screen is a transmissive display panel, wherein the second photo-sensor is mounted between the backlight and the rear surface of the display panel.

11. The method of claim 5, wherein multiple user selectable brightness settings are supported, one of the brightness settings requiring less power than the other supported brightness settings.

13. A display device, comprising:

a housing;

a display panel, mounted in said housing, having a front portion comprising a viewing surface and a rear portion comprising a non-viewing surface;

a backlight positioned behind the display panel;

a front photo-sensor for determining the intensity of light impinging on the viewing surface of the display panel;

a rear photo-sensor for determining the intensity of light impinging on the non-viewing surface of the display panel, the light impinging on the non-viewing surface comprising ambient light originating from outside the housing and said ambient light also entering the housing from behind the non-viewing surface; and

a backlight intensity control circuit for controlling the intensity of the backlight as a function of the determined intensity of light impinging on the viewing surface of the display panel and also as a function of the determined intensity of light impinging on the non-viewing surface of the display panel.

15. The display device of claim 14, wherein the display screen includes a liquid crystal cell.

17. The display device of claim 14, further comprising:

a user accessible brightness control coupled to the backlight intensity control circuit.

20. The display device of claim 19, wherein the intensity control module includes means for automatically adjusting, on a periodic basis, backlight intensity.

23. A portable computer device, comprising:

a housing;

a display panel mounted in said housing, having a front portion comprising a viewing surface, and a rear portion comprising a non-viewing surface;

a backlight positioned behind the display panel;

a front photo-sensor for determining the intensity of light impinging on the front portion of the display panel;

a rear photo-sensor, mounted inside said housing behind said display panel, for determining the intensity of light impinging on the rear portion of the display panel, the light impinging on the rear portion of the display panel comprising ambient light entering the housing from outside the housing, said ambient light also entering the housing from behind the non-viewing surface;

a backlight intensity control circuit for controlling the intensity of the backlight as a function of the determined intensity of light impinging on the front portion of the display panel, and as a function of the determined intensity of light impinging on a rear portion of the display panel; and

a base portion, comprising a keyboard and a central processing unit, connected to the display panel.

---

24. The portable computer device of claim 23, wherein the display panel includes a transmissive liquid crystal display screen and a housing, the computer device further comprising:

a hinge for connecting the display panel to the base portion.

25. The portable computer device of claim 24,

wherein the backlight intensity control circuit is included in the base portion; and

wherein the backlight intensity control circuit includes means for automatically adjusting, on a periodic basis, backlight intensity.

26. The display device of claim 13, further comprising:

a device for directing the ambient light through said non-viewing surface, the device for directing ambient light being moveably attached to said housing; and

a diffuser located behind the display panel, the diffuser being moveably attached to said housing at a different location from the device for directing the ambient light, the diffuser for diffusing at least some of said ambient light before that ambient light passes through said non-viewing surface of the display panel.

27. The portable computer device of claim 23, further comprising:

a device for directing said ambient light through said non-viewing surface, the device for directing said ambient light being moveably attached to said housing; and

a diffuser located behind the display panel, the diffuser being moveably attached to said housing at a location different from said device for directing said ambient light, the diffuser for diffusing at least some of said ambient light before that ambient light passes through said non-viewing surface of the display panel.